

QUEST

COLLEGE REAL
INFLUENTIAL
SECRETS
LEGEND
EFFECT INNOVATOR
IDENTITY COMMUNICATION
Meaning WHO AM I?
COMPLEX
STRONG
Tragedy
Adventure



No. 16 / Spring 2014

LYNN
UNIVERSITY

College of Arts and Sciences

QUEST is the annual literary and arts journal for students, faculty, and staff of Lynn University

QUEST

Number 16

Spring 2014

Quest is published annually by
Lynn University College of Arts and Sciences.

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(ISS 1522-9904) No. 16
Printed in the United States of America.

Cover Photo: Christelle Mehu

QUEST

Number 16/ Spring 2014

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QUEST is published annually by Lynn University. Opinions expressed in **QUEST** are not necessarily those of the editor or of the university.

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Gary Villa



Gary Villa

Africa is in Me

By Jeffrey Morgan

Where rolling salt water washes ashore in Florida,
I am breathing in African dust
that has travelled across the Atlantic,
drying up would-be hurricanes,
entering me, and travelling down my windpipe.

I imagine an accumulation,
perhaps on some tar from years of smoking,
taking root, becoming brown dirt
that matches my skin
and accepts moisture and organisms,
ancient as Lucy, prehistoric.

Like a small mangrove island develops,
so does a little isle at the bottom of my lung.

But, it will never be populated
with children on swings,
men receiving reverse vasectomies,
or women requesting an epidural
on my sunless primordial ground
even though in sensing the new old life inside me
I often gape at the sun.

In time, though, after I'm dead and buried,
the African continent may rise,
spring from some Florida sand
and find itself at home.

The Magical

By Jeffrey Morgan

We have read the words by the shady spring and cool rocks
that stand one on top of another,
so many different sizes,
that it seems like magic that a bard could build a string of sounds
incanting life we only see on the walls of ancient caves
preserved in the French Alps by such a combination of natural factors,
not even a wizard who is one potion ahead of the competition
could conjure all the ingredients;
such a man would be more than a man
and would probably tell us to return to the shady spring by the cool rocks
and stand one on top of another until we reach the stars.

It's Not You, It's Me

By Ali Guerra

When we met, I told you I was a vagrant drifter
that liked to stand on the edge of cliffs and play catch with the wind
until it heaves me over the tip, and you were the ice and the razor-
edged rocks I would land on. I know that you are not about poetry,
that you can't see the shipwreck between my ribs or the jagged
edges of my heart when I talk to you. I know that you don't
understand that my bones aren't made of barbed wire like yours are
and if you let me unfold in front of you, I am going to turn you into a bandage
I will use to heal up old wounds but make new ones. I have taught myself
to be reckless and sloppy in an attempt to avoid feeling weak, but there
is glass where my limbs should be and they will break if you hold them
too tightly. I am not like most people.

When we met, I thought I could crack you like an eggshell until
everything that you were too afraid to tell me would spill out like yolk,
but you cracked me instead, and now I am empty. The long silences
now fill up a room the way fire would inside a burning building,
and we are being suffocated by it, the torch that ignited it
still sitting in the place where I left it.

Sated

By Emily Jalloul

She does kegels for him.
Three daily sets of ten,
while she's behind the desk at school or work,
in traffic or brushing her teeth.

They smoke and eat pizza in bed,
kissing with greasy tongues.
They come with her on top,
pulled tight into his chest.
"What's for dinner?" he asks.
She worries about her waist,
but relents when he mentions burgers and shakes.
At midnight, she'll fry potato
with onion and garlic and parsley.

She never gave in easy.
She never watched sports or apologized.
She tolerates things she never did.
Not the porn or reckless driving,
but the faucet left to run,
his tardiness and flirtatiousness.

She never felt sexy.
She never cried over a man before,
never felt an ache crawl from her chest
to her throat and stomach.
She was never sated.
But with the buttered French toast
and his grip on her thigh,
she is voracious, sexy in her gluttony.

Screaming Waters

By Adira Kessler

The roaring waters fall
fast and hard from above
it dances on the shimmering ground.
The water screams until it is out of breath
and then it whispers with gentle drops.
Then soon it will drift away
leaving behind wet mirrors
in deep parts of the land.
The waters soon drift away
marking the earth with reflections
quietly reminding from below
that which came from above.



Stephanie Canonica

In the Orphan's Eye

By Tom Ferstle

In the orphan's eye, the crowd hides
The faces of aunts and uncles, sisters
And brothers, maybe even mother
Or father-their faces appear and
Slip away in airports, restaurants,
And dreams just out of reach.

Imagine my surprise when I looked into my son's eyes
And saw there reflected a line of ancestors crowded
Deep in shadows, faces astonished like my own
None of us recognizing the other

A Toast

By Tom Ferstle

Love and adventure
Turned from a toast to a child
Now our future grows
And calls to us his voice
So strange and sweet
Innocent and wild.

So let us listen carefully
To see where we are called
And each day collect
Like this bowl
Love's treasures.

Invisible

By Katie Welch

In a room there are many voices.
Voices that are loud, voices that are quiet.
Voices that are sweet, voices that are sour.
There are many voices, but one is different from the others.
This voice is hardly noticeable.
Every time she tries to make a sound, the others drown hers.
Her eyes are blue with waves of ocean.
Her cheeks are red with rays from the sun.
Everyone who looks at her only sees through her.
They never pass a glance to even call her name.
She is alone with no one to talk to.
A day will come when someone will reach for her hand, and guide her into the light.
The only problem is, that girl... is me.

Unseen

By Henry Patterson

As the snowfall finally came to an end, John quickly grabbed his hunting rifle and headed out now that the snow would not cover the tracks. Even though it stopped snowing, it still wasn't the best time to go out. The sun would be behind the mountains soon and it got very cold at night around there, but he knew he had to go out. He hadn't gone hunting in weeks, and he was running low on rations and dried meat. If he was going to do it, he had to do it now.

John walked for about fifteen minutes before he finally found some tracks. They were fresh tracks of a single deer that had walked by not too long ago. As he followed the tracks, he began to worry because he hadn't seen anything yet, and if he didn't head back soon, it would be pitch black by the time he got to his cabin. Just then, he heard a rustling noise up ahead but he still couldn't see anything. As he walked closer, he suddenly stopped and fell backwards like he had walked into something, but there was nothing there.

When he got back up, he reached out his hand and touched what felt like tree bark even though all he saw in front of him was nothing. Just as he was standing there confused, the sunlight came down, and he saw in front of him the shadow of a tall tree, but no tree. He looked around and saw several shadows without trees and wondered if he was still sane. Suddenly he heard a growling noise behind him that sounded like a bear. He quickly turned around and saw bear prints in the snow walking towards him.

John stood very still, hoping whatever was in front of him would walk past him. As he stood there, he saw the footsteps coming closer and the growling getting louder. He slowly lifted his gun up, not knowing if he'd shoot any thing. Suddenly snow from a branch fell down, revealing the creature as it gave out a loud roar. Without hesitation, John fired the rifle and saw a bloody patch in the air. Sensing it was dead, John slowly walked up as he saw the thing's true form; it was a grizzly bear. John could do nothing else but just stand there, wondering what was going on.

Just then he heard a voice behind him. "Oh my god! You killed it!" John quickly turned around, aiming his gun, and saw three men standing in the distance. They quickly reached their hands in the air when they saw the gun.

"Wait, don't shoot!" shouted one of the men, worried for his life.

"What the hell are you weirdoes doing out here?" John asked, angry and confused.

The middle man spoke in a worried voice, "We had to leave the plant. Every one else there is dead!"

"What are you talking about?" John asked now more worried than angry.

"The beasts attacked. We couldn't see them but they were every where!" shouted one of the other men almost out of breath.

"Oh my god, it's happened to the trees now!" the third man said, looking at the shadows.

John couldn't stand any more of this. "What are you talking about?" he shouted, "What do you know about these things?"

The man in the middle stepped forward, "We started it!"

"What?" John stood baffled, still pointing his gun at them. "What's going on?"

The middle man tried to collect himself, focusing on the rifles pointed at him, and told their story. "We were workers at the chemical plant just on the edge of these woods. One of the new chemicals we were experimenting on some how leaked out into the stream nearby."

"What the hell leaked out?" John yelled, dying to know. The middle man continued, "It was a serum that caused organic tissue to bend light around itself making it invisible."

John could not believe what he was hearing. The middleman continued, "We discovered the leak three days ago when we saw invisible squirrels carrying nuts. We tried to stop it, but when we got back to plant, we saw people being mauled by nothing. We escaped, and we've been out here ever since."

John just stood there and began to lower his gun but then pointed it back at them. "You expect me to believe that bullshit?" he yelled furiously.

Just then, he heard screams of pain as he looked and saw one of the men being dragged away by his feet. The snarling sounds suggested wolves. As the other two men watched in horror, John quickly shouted at them, "Run!" The men followed John as he ran back towards his cabin with the creatures not far behind.

As they were running, John looked back and could see the kicked-up snow barely revealing the wolves. After what seemed like forever, they finally reached the old cabin and quickly ran inside. The two men were skeptical that the old rustic cabin would give much protection against the things outside. They then saw that even John doubted the protection as he went to the window and stuck his gun out, ready to shoot.

The Night

By Evan Hargrove

A bright Flame illuminated inside of me
Shadows dancing upon the walls Illuminating what we think is real
The laughter, the pain, the regret
What do I gain from the simple lifeless night?
The knowledge I adorn for so elusive
Why can I not express this feeling?



Writer's Block

By Kwame Edusei

Writer's block ...
fingers waxen, halting
typing out a repetitive, ugly pattern
the words like burns across the page.
Hesitantly, I gingerly attempt to grasp hold of my
unusually absent river of creativity
tapping the flow
guiding it to where it is needed, an irrigation system for the drought in my head
and am met with empty hands and slapped wrists.

Haiku I & Tanka

By N'Quavah R. Velazquez

Ugh! Cold cramped stage coach
Where mud clenches sick bodies,
The judge, circuit rides.

Tanka
Deep blue crested waves
Team with symbiotic life
Harmoniously!
Weave their music shore to shore
Rise, shine, breathe the melody.

The Brightest Dawn

By Jorge Martin

Waiting on the Bay
I'm still waiting for a better day
Waiting for the rising sun
I'm still waiting for the brightest dawn

Still covered by the starry night
I can't lie that I'm still feeling a little bit of fright
But I don't want to lose you from my sight
Cause when you start showing your reddish light
I got a feeling that everything is gonna be alright

Waiting for this dawn that resets my time
For this new rising sun that is so sublime
For this dawn that marks a new start
And where all my bad experiences just fall apart

Feeling the cold night breeze all over my skin
I'm still waiting for this dawn to heat my body with more degrees
And sensing your closeness just around the corner
I would like you to stay a little longer
And bring my life a brand new order

Poem 2

By Harika Rao

You came into my life as a pleasant breeze,
Swept away by it, I let my guard down,
Letting you be my knight in shining armor.

Through the gentle phase of fledging love,
I loved the warmth of our relationship,
I kissed you and caressed you.

The magic of your articulation, left me spellbound
The twinkle in your eye captured my attention,
Orienting my delightful fondness mirage in you.

Little did I know, the winds would turn tumultuous
You made me face the fears of a virgin naive girl,
Of deceit, distrust, and heartache

Shattered my dreams and crumbled my emotions,
All my hopes and questions left unanswered,
Leaving me stranded with tears of hurtful memories.

Despite the affects of the boisterous relationship,
My first infatuation shall always be you,
I treasure the joys of our sweet nothings.

Campfire

By Angela Kahan

By evening's veil, flames jut and spit
like a forked tongue licking the night.
Mesmerized by the hot, orange dance,
we toast the moon under drunk light.
A crackling symphony calls to me,
a primitive chord struck somewhere inside.
Centuries ago, I danced around one once,
barely clothed with pierced nose as a Zulu bride.

How I love the long hug of heat
knitted softly around my chilly arms.
Night fire holds us like lovers,
captive to its charms.
We soak in the simple beauty of it all,
the web's set and escape we shall not try.
Time suspends hourglass mid-sand
as newborn senses cry.

Maid Service

By David Fleisher

SETTING: A hotel

AT RISE: A.J. BARCLAY and his wife, ELAINE, are S.L.
LAVERNE, a maid, is S.R. ALEXANDER HADLEY,
hotel manager, is C.S. ALL are facing the audience.

BARCLAY

Dear Maid,

Please do not leave any more of those little bars of soap in my bathroom. I have brought my own bath-sized Dial. Remove the six unopened little bars from the shelf under the medicine chest and also the three in the shower soap dish. They are in my way.

Thank you, A.J. Barclay

LAVERNE

Dear Room 535,

I took the three hotel soaps out of the shower soap dish. You know the six bars under the medicine chest? Well, I put them on top of the Kleenex box just in case you change your mind. That leaves only three bars I left today. My boss wants me to leave three soaps every day. Is this okay?

Your Maid, Laverne

BARCLAY

Dear Maid,

No, this is not okay. Apparently, you did not read carefully my note concerning the little bars of soap. When I got back to my room this evening, I found you had added three little Camays to the shelf under my medicine cabinet. I don't want them. They are in my way when shaving, brushing teeth, etc.

A.J. Barclay

LAVERNE

Dear Room 535,

I had the day off yesterday. My Relief Maid - her name's Rosita - she didn't see your note. Sorry about that. Anyway, I took the six little hotel soaps that were botherin' you and put them in the soap dish where your Dial was. I put the Dial in the medicine cabinet. I didn't remove the three soaps inside the medicine cabinet because we have to put three soaps in there for all new check-ins. Is this okay?

Your Maid, Laverne

HADLEY

Dear Mr. Barclay,

I was informed this morning that you are unhappy with your maid service. Please accept my apologies. In the future, contact me directly so I can give it my personal attention. Feel free to call extension 913 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M. Thank you.

Alexander Hadley, Manager

BARCLAY

Dear Mr. Hadley,

It is impossible to contact you directly since I leave the hotel on business at 7:45 A.M. and don't get back before 6 P.M. The maid - I don't recall her name - must think I'm a new check-in. She left another three bars of hotel soap in my medicine cabinet, plus three bars on the bathroom shelf. In just five days here, Mr. Hadley, I have accumulated twenty-four little bars of soap. Why are you doing this to me?

A.J. Barclay

HADLEY

Dear Mr. Barclay,

Your maid, Laverne, has been instructed to stop delivering soap to your room. If I can be of further assistance, please don't hesitate for a moment to contact me at extension 913 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M.

Alexander Hadley, Manager

ELAINE

Dear Mr. Hadley,

My husband's bath-sized Dial soap is missing. In fact, we have no soap at all. I had to call the bellhop last night to bring us four little Cashmere Bouquets.

Elaine Barclay, Room 535

HADLEY

Dear Mrs. Barclay,

I have taken measures to rectify your soap situation. Your maid, Laverne, has been severely reprimanded, plus her bonus for being "Maid of the Month" has been revoked. I hope you accept my sincerest apologies. If you should experience any further problems, please call me at extension 913 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M.

Alexander Hadley, Manager

BARCLAY

Dear Mr. Hadley,

Who the hell left fifty-four little bars of Camay in my room? I came in last night and found fifty-four little bars of soap. I don't want fifty-four little bars of soap. Do you realize I have fifty-four bars of soap in here?! All I want is my bath-sized Dial. Please give me back my bath-sized Dial.

A.J. Barclay

ELAINE

Dear Mr. Hadley,

It is incumbent upon you to have my husband's bath-sized Dial returned to the room at once. Please understand: we have a situation here in Room 535.

Elaine Barclay

P.S. If I appear edgy and rude, it is only because my husband has not had a shower in six days.

HADLEY

Dear Mr and Mrs. Barclay,

I'm sorry if you were under the impression this hotel issues bath-sized Dial. I was able to locate some bath-sized Ivory which I left in your medicine cabinet. The hotel has important foreign heads of state arriving today. But, please, don't let that deter you from contacting me for assistance at extension 913 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M.

Alexander Hadley, Manager

LAVERNE

Dear Mr. Hadley,

I'm married with three children. Please give me back my "Maid of the Month" bonus. I'm tryin' real hard in Room 535, but the people in there complain about everything. You know me, Mr. Hadley, and you know how hard I work. Now I know you got a lot on your mind, but so do I. My husband left me this week. Please, Mr. Hadley, give me back my bonus.

Sincerely, Laverne

ELAINE

Dear Maid,

Do you have a screw loose? How many times do we have to tell you we want only one bar of soap in this room! The name of the soap is Dial. Got it? Dial! My husband is a very busy man. He doesn't have time for this nonsense. I will be returning from Saks Fifth Avenue at 3 P.M. today, and I expect to see one bar of bath-sized Dial in the soap dish.

Mrs. Barclay, Room 535

P.S: I just want you to know my husband has ulcers, and you are making them worse.

BARCLAY

Dear Mr. Hadley,

Just a short note to bring you up to date on my latest soap inventory. As of today, I possess the following: eighteen Camay on the shelf under the medicine cabinet. Eleven Camay on the Kleenex dispenser. Three Cashmere Bouquet and four bath-sized Ivory on the bedroom dresser. Six Camay, very moist, in the shower soap dish. One Cashmere Bouquet, slightly used, on the northeast corner of the bathtub. And six more Camay on the northwest corner of the bathtub.

A.J. Barclay

LAVERNE

Dear Mrs. Barclay,

If you and your husband don't stop complainin' about me, my boss is gonna fire me. Mam, I'm doin' the best job I can. I'll do anything you want. Just stop sayin' bad things about me to Mr. Hadley. Please, mam!

Your Maid, Laverne

(LAVERNE EXITS)

ELAINE

Dear Mr. Hadley,

The maid - I think her name's Lydia - is threatening my husband and me. Once more, let me say it plainly: my husband and I already have soap. Dial. We don't like your soap. We don't want your soap. We don't need your soap. Thank you very much. And may I say in closing you might consider firing Lydia. Your hotel deserves better.

Elaine Barclay, Room 535

HADLEY

Dear Mrs. Barclay,

It goes without saying this hotel is quite proud of its five-star rating. And we intend to keep it - by any means necessary. I have let the maid, Laverne, go. Quite frankly, it was not an easy thing for me to do. She was quite upset. But it is vitally important to all of us here at the hotel that you and Mr. Barclay feel comfortable during your stay.

Alexander Hadley, Manager

ELAINE

Dear Mr. Hadley,

Thank you for taking the necessary steps to correct the problem. I intend to write a letter to your supervisor praising you for a job well done.

Mrs. Barclay, Room 535

(ELAINE EXITS)

HADLEY

Dear Mr. Barclay,

I understand you will be with us another two days. I would like to inform you about a development that occurred this morning. No reason to be alarmed - I just feel you and Mrs. Barclay should be aware of this. Laverne, a former employee of this hotel who had been servicing your room, shot and killed three guests. Security has informed me Laverne may still be on the premises.

Warm Regards, Alexander Hadley.

P.S. Enjoy your remaining two days with us.

BARCLAY

Dear Mr. Hadley,

I hope you don't plan on charging me for all the extra soap your incompetent maid brought to this room. I refuse to pay for it. If you insist on charging me for soap I never wanted in the first place, you leave me no choice but to take legal action.

A. J. Barclay

HADLEY

Dear Mr. Barclay,

I can't put into words how sorry I am about the recent loss of your lovely wife. Please accept my sincerest condolences. If it's any consolation, Laverne was captured in the parking garage not long after she scrubbed your wife to death with a bar of Dial. And now for some good news: as manager of this hotel, I would like to personally invite you to be our guest for another week - all expenses paid, including three meals a day in our fine dining room. Once again, my deepest sympathy over the loss of your wife. If I can assist in any way with funeral arrangements, don't hesitate to call me at extension 913 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M.

Alexander Hadley, Manager

BARCLAY

Dear Mr. Hadley,

I would be delighted to stay in your hotel for another week. My wife's death has caused me to fall behind in my business, and I will need to stay in town a few more days. Considering my bath-sized Dial is no longer of any use to me, I have reluctantly decided to use your little hotel soap on a trial basis. In the event this new soap arrangement doesn't work out, please stash a bar of bath-sized Dial in the hotel vault. This will save me from having to go to the grocery store and buy another bar. Surely you understand, Mr. Hadley, I am a very busy man.

A most pleasant goodnight, A.J. Barclay

(LIGHTS FADE)

END OF PLAY

This play is an extension of an original work by Shelley Berman, entitled "Little Soaps," which is included in his book, *A Hotel is a Funny Place* (Price, Stern, Sloan. Copyright 1972, 1985).

Buried Treasure

By Cindy Sorto

Golden leafs pounced in the air
Colors changed and summer was too sudden
My mother spiced the air with magic
My father racked the golden nuggets in a pile
Here lies my precious treasure
My favourite chic scarf bundled my neck
I was the autumn princess when the world was at rest
My furry tailed servants bowed at my entry
But overtime winter robbed me of my jewels
My reign would soon end
But next fall would begin again



Gary Villa

Tiny Little Letters

By Celestina Miklus

Tiny little letters there for me and you
Pictures their outstanding
Never ending too
Colors are astounding
White, red, black, and blue
Hearts are sad and hoping
That someone right for you
Tiny little letters
Written black on white
Sometimes they're expensive
Sometimes priced just right
Tiny little letters
How they set you free
Believing them is easy
Read what you want to see
Lonely ones are out there
Trying to believe
Those Tiny little letters
Will one day set them free?
Nothing is for certain
But this much I believe
Tiny little letters sometimes can deceive.
Pictures are outdated
Never ending too
Colors are astounding
White, red, black, and blue
Tiny little letters
Typed especially for you.

ri-bel

By Monique Joseph

Born into the abundant hues of rose,

ri-bel

groomed as you are delicate; pronounced as fragile.

ri-bel

Beautiful, smart, BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL, girl.

ri-bel

Cherish your rules of etiquette.

ri-bel

From sunrise to sunset, you will abide by your

ri-bel

RAPE SCHEDULE.

ri-bel

We are raising you to be a woman soon.

ri-bel

You were birthed to be a mother, a domestic goddess,

ri-bel, ri-bel

a woman.

ri-bel

The achievement of your wealth shall never derive from your own success,
but only through holy matrimony.

ri-bel, ri-bel, ri-bel

Give no ear to those other women who rant on

ri-bel

about equality, they weren't raised in a good home like you.

ri-bel

Those radicals are uncouth; savages.

ri-bel

Parading around like that, wanting you to accompany them in sin.

ri-bel

They want you to murder your babies.

ri-bel

You are woman, they are less than.

ri-bel

BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL, YOU ARE!

ri-bel

You are woman, and you must live up to it.

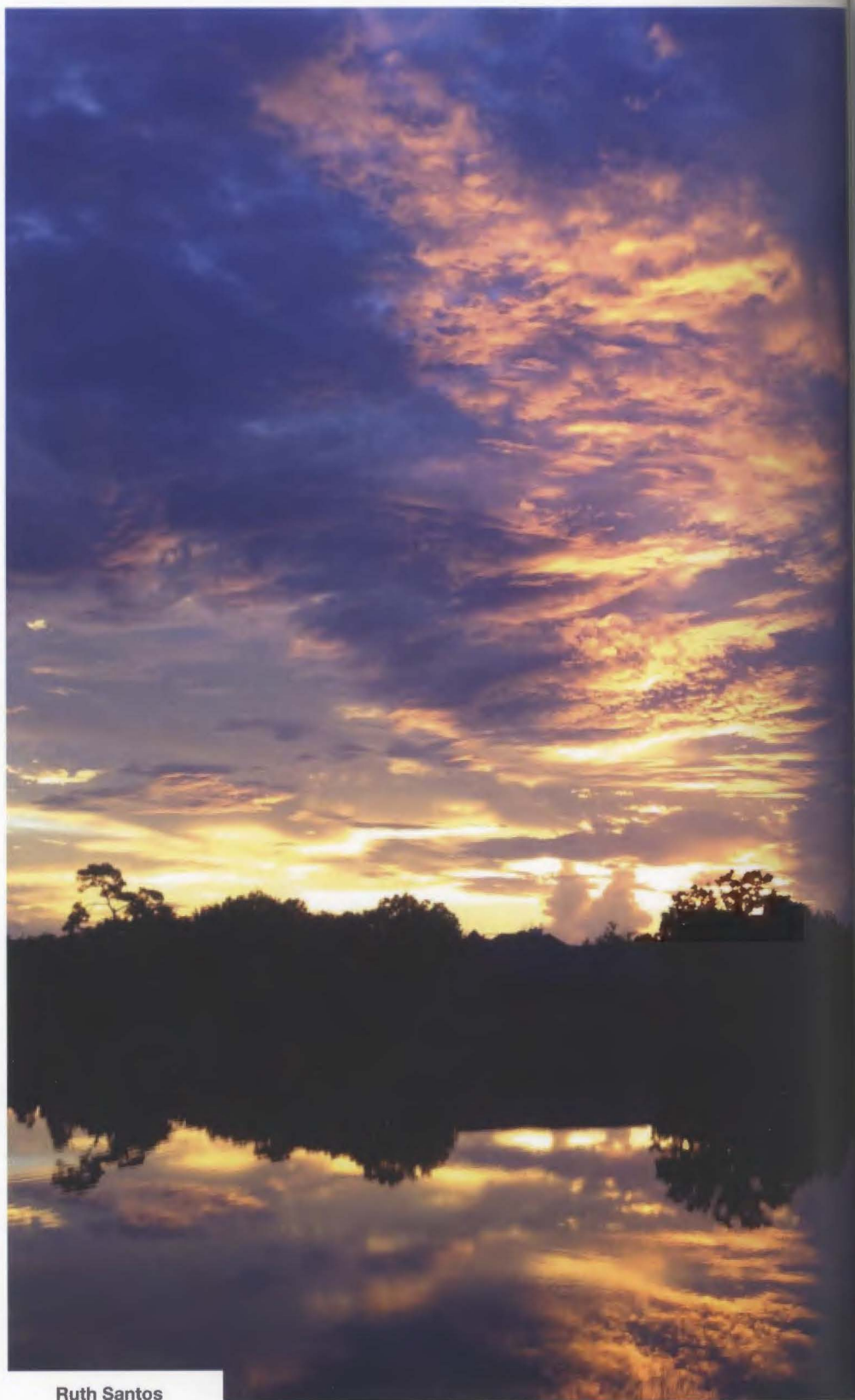
ri-bel

Do not be misinformed, it's not what you think, or what you know...

ri-bel

It's only what we tell you! You are woman.

ri-bel



Ruth Santos

Private Cell

By Mitchell Posner

Can't hear the noise around me,
But I hear the silence well.
It echos off the moonbeams
In my private cell of hell.

I can still smell her perfume,
Picture sunlight on her hair.
Even while memories loom
And I drown in bloody tears.

All I do is remember.
In my own petard I'm caught.
My heart's a flaming ember,
Ever burning, so distraught.

Maybe she knows forgiveness.
I know I'll never forget.
Maybe she wants her vengeance.
My death can even the debt.

I sit and hear her screaming
As the booze still spins my head.
Hypnotic flames still gleaming;
Silence! My lover is dead.

Sirens holler and flicker.
Uniforms running around.
Fire and water bicker.
My blood puddling on the ground.

A man in blue approaches,
Spies the slash across the wrist.
Too late! Darkness encroaches,
I don't think it will desist.

I sent my love heavenly,
So I sent myself to hell.
Earned, eternal misery
In my very private cell.



Hannah Markowitz

Spider Legs

By Ali Guerra

I imagine you'll be wearing a white crew-neck sweater, curved at the nape, bare, and you'll have spaces between the skin on your lower wrists where there once had been wounds, but I won't ask you where they came from when I hesitantly curve your fingers with mine.

After dinner you'll take me to your favorite hideaway behind the Ten Mile River where you'd say you like to sit and shrink from the world like spider legs after they die, and I'll listen to you talk quietly about the meaninglessness of life as you skip rocks into the river making wrinkles in the water beneath our feet.

At night you'll lead me back to your condo and we'll share a bottle of Cabernet and you'll be four glasses in before I tell you to slow it down, but you won't, and by midnight we are on our backs, fully-clothed, and I'll reach over and graze the skin on your arm but you'll shrink back in timidity like a Mimosa that folds inward when you touch it.

Haze

By Christina Johnson

It's so cloudy
I'm in a haze
My head's spinning
I'm in a daze
What's happening?
Is it a phase?
Why is it that
You I crave?
Twists and turns
Relationship's like a maze.
On a whirlwind
Then time delays
Never again
Then he betrays
Still I find myself
Wishing for those days.



Two Soccer Players

By Andrea Carlini

GIULIO

Dear Antonio, football is the most beautiful sport. For me it is like going out with a woman every time I play!

ANTONIO

Oh yes, Giulio, too bad our wives do not understand our passion, they are always ready to ruin our beliefs!

GIULIO

Yeah, my dear... I wonder if when we are dead and they will finally leave us alone. I wonder if there are football fields in the afterlife.

ANTONIO

(he thinks for a moment and then) Look, why do not we make a pact: the first of the two who dies, goes back on Earth to reveal to the other if in the afterlife football exists, do you agree?

GIULIO

Yes, I do! (they shake hands. Immediately after the handshake, while the two greet each other, Antonio feels ill and dies as a doornail. Giulio called him loudly, but he realizes that his friend is dead. Dark. Ten second pause, to go to bed and fall asleep for Giulio, who promptly must get under the blankets. Lights. Giulio is sleeping. Antonio's ghost comes in.)

ANTONIO

Giuliooooo, Giuliooooo... (Giulio turns around a bit in his bed, half asleep wondering who is calling, then finally turns to the specter and makes a great shout, falling from the bed)

GIULIO

Aaaaahhhh!!! (trembling) Who... who... who are you?

ANTONIO

Ma sono io, Antonio, non ti ricordi più del nostro patto? Il primo che fosse morto, sarebbe sceso sulla terra per rivelare all'altro se nell'aldilà ci fosse la possibilità di giocare a tennis... ricordi adesso? But it's me, Antonio, don't you remember our deal? The first, who died, would come down to Earth to reveal to the other if in the afterlife there was a chance to play football... Remember now?

GIULIO

Yes... yes, I remember... A-A-Antonio, and what news do you bri-bri-bring? (very afraid)

ANTONIO

I bring you a good and a bad news!

GIULIO

What is the good one?

ANTONIO

The good news is that in the afterlife there are a lot of football fields and a lot of tournaments. The fields are beautiful, there are all kinds of surface and you do not pay anything. It is the national sport of the angels. Tomorrow I will have to play in the tournament of St. Peter.

GIULIO

(he looks at him a moment, and asks) And the bad one?

ANTONIO

Well, you know, I looked at the board... you play tomorrow morning at eleven o'clock!

THE END

John's Bad Day

By James LaTorre

John pulled off at the next exit, and drove to a gas station. He needed a fill-up, a pee, and some sunflower seeds. The seeds would stop him from smoking and also get the tobacco smell off his fingers. No one likes tobacco-smelling fingers, John thought. He sure didn't. John was looking to become more awesome, starting with the scent of his fingers. Always looking to better his self, he told himself. Number one quest for purification and heaven on earth. Got to start small. "Why? Why try and better myself?" John asked himself this as he grabbed the bathroom key from the attendant. "Why do I look at people and estimate my self worth based off of them?" He left the store and walked to the bathroom around on the side of the building. "Why do I seem to think that everyone knows something I don't?" John kept thinking. "Doesn't that make me resent them? And when I find out that they don't know anymore than I think they do, why do I feel better than them for it? It's like, 'haha, sweet, there isn't some big secret you're holding over my head. You're not as smart as I thought you were. You're not better than me!' And that's anytime they slip up, or say something self-deprecating and funny. I don't know what I'm talking about. I just want to be perfect so no one will laugh." John realized suddenly that he was staring at himself in the mirror.

He shook his head, checked his hair, went to a urinal and peed, flushed, and walked back into the gas station mart. The person behind the counter kept looking at him with strange combination of alertness and boredom. John wondered if he suspected him of anything. Maybe he does that to every customer. "Maybe it's the way I walk," John thought. He had always thought that body language speaks just as loud as verbal language, and that was intimidating to John because he doesn't know what his body is saying half as well as he knows what his mouth is saying. And most of the time he doesn't even know what his mouth's saying either. And so, John stood in front of the candy aisle, pondering what his body language was saying at that time.

What it was saying was "I'm standing looking at candy."

He grabbed a snickers and a soda from the fridge, and walked up to the register. The guy grabbed his stuff and asked how it's going. John told him it's going alright.

Alright probably came from the combination of the words “all” and “right,” which is interesting, because that’s not what alright means. John decided to make this guy’s day a little out of the ordinary. He vocalized that thought. The attendant looked at him like one might look at a child, and said “Ha, yeah that’s interesting. Total’s \$2.80.” John laughed, thanked him and left.

Getting back into his truck, John pondered this interaction. This guy might’ve thought he was hitting on him, or maybe that he was crazy. Maybe he really did think it was interesting, and is now pondering the development of language. Maybe he was an English major with dreams of becoming a famous writer/critic, and John just blew on the embers of his soul which is now well on it’s way to becoming a bonfire that engulfs his entire being. Maybe he’ll quit his job, after finally giving his boss a piece of his mind, and hit the road with a pen and paper. Soon he’ll be on the cover of all the major literary magazines. He’ll be hailed as the most innovative literary philosopher since Calvino. All because of a bit of brain musing John decided to grace upon him. He just helped this guy become the new Shakespeare.

He lit a cigarette. The ground was moving fast under his truck, or at least it looked like it was. But it wasn’t, it was just sitting there like it is now, and he was driving on it. “The universe doesn’t happen to me, I happen to the universe.” John thought. He put out the cigarette after just a few drags, and got off at the next exit, not really knowing why, then realized he forgot to purchase sunflower seeds at the last gas station. Why did he take the exit, then realize he hadn’t purchased seeds? The effect came before the cause, the answer before the question. He felt something, some sort of frenzy awareness take control of his body. He knew, before he knew.

He pulled into the nearest gas station and walked inside. He picked out some sunflower seeds, and made his way to the register. It was pretty crowded, this time there was a rather long line, and people filed in behind him as he waited. When it came time for John to purchase his seeds, he didn’t right away. The registrar held out her hand, but John looked her in the eyes and said: “These sunflower seeds would’ve grown to become a beautiful sunflower. Instead they were roasted, salted, and put into a non-bio-degradable bag. I’d like to purchase these, but not purely because I want to eat them.

I want to purchase them to make a statement: I understand the game they're playing, and my way of winning is by pretending I don't understand it." She just frowned and kept her hand held out. John gave her the bag, she rang it up, and he left without another word from either of them.

John had forgotten why he was feeling so energetic, but still rode the feeling nonetheless. This time though, getting into his truck, it was harder to convince himself that her life was just positively impacted from his depth of thought and character. "Oh well, fuck her, that's her fault," John thought. He lit up, and drove on.

About twenty minutes later, he got to feeling really sick, like there was a creature in his gut wriggling around. Too many cigarettes and chocolate and sitting. He tried to ignore it, but he could feel the creature creeping it's way up his esophagus, trying to escape through John's mouth. He swallows repeatedly, trying to tame the beast back into his gut, but it was relentless. Quickly, John pulled over; right they're on the freeway. He opened the door, and released the beast. John imagined the beast must have had acid blood because he felt a burning in his throat and erosion on his teeth. He sat there for a while, his sponge-head pounding. Puke was on the door. He never turned his truck off, just kept his foot on the brake. Not wanting to look at the puke on the ground anymore, he slowly released some pressure on the pedal and crept forward. That's nice... No more puke. He continued on, following the straight edge of the side of the road, not bothering to look up. He knew he had room; there was no guardrail in sight as far as he could remember. "People must think this scene marvelously goofy," John thought, "a moving truck on the edge of the road with no driver in sight." John kept his head down. It was fun. "It's not every day you see something like this," John thought, "and I owe it to myself to experience a break from the humdrum buzz of everyday life. I owe it to myself. And if I owe anything to myself, I owe it to other people. We're all human after all, aren't we? Everyone, deep down, wants the same thing. They want to believe there's more out there, and I'm showing them there is. It's me; I'm the embodiment of that feeling, that sensation of desperate hope. I know before I know. Just like those gas station attendants, I'm changing the course of individuals, and therefore the aura that shapes our culture. We're all just a point on a triangle, all of our evolutionary development has lead to this exact moment in time, physically, technically, spiritually, any kind of "ally" you can think of. Here it is! Here I am, breaking the mold, advancing mankind through the innovation and destruction of social norms!"

Slowly, John released his foot from the brake. He started moving forward. His left foot dangled from the open car door, and his right foot moved toward the gas pedal. "I'm doing this for the people driving by," John told himself. "The people honking their horn, desperate with anticipation and fear, I'm doing this was for them." He pressed down on the gas a little. "I'm making them feel human, showing them that they too, can care for the well being of someone besides themselves." He pressed a little harder. "I'm reminding them that the best feeling comes from caring for someone who needs care. It makes them feel a healthy sense of control." The only thing separating his shoe from the floor of the truck now was just that thin, metal rectangle gas pedal. "I'm giving them that control. If just for that one moment of pure feeling, of pure humanity." John smiled, and his truck flipped over a guardrail traveling at 74 miles per hour. It landed on its top and crumpled, like a soda can, and John crumpled with it.

Words

By Jessica Taylor

There are so many words in the human vocabulary
So many words we say in one day
So many words we say instead of others
So many words we don't need to say
And the most important ones usually forgotten

I wish I had spoken my truth
At least it would relieve this "what if" feeling
Thinking I had all the time
Meanwhile our world was crumbling down

And now my mind is loud with thoughts
Buzzing and nipping as I walk
While regret echoes in my heartbeat
So, instead I speak to myself like someone can hear
Because these echoing thoughts
Are from the words I never said

Metamorphosis

By Elaine Deering

We are all butterflies.
We began life emerging from the egg,
Crawling on our bellies,
Scavenging for food,
Struggling for survival.
As we grew older, we sought refuge in a comfortable chrysalis,
Clinging to a branch,
Swaying in the wind,
Sheltered from predators.
Our body parts dissolved and transformed.
Our folded wings grew, gathered blood,
Arming us for adulthood.
In the final and most glorious stage,
We spread our wings,
In an astounding array of colors, borders, and speckles,
Soaring and winging from flower to flower,
Seeking a mate and enjoying the garden of our surroundings,
In the brief, happy, final moments of our angelic existence.



Stephanie Canonica

QUEST Artists and Authors

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